

Florence Township Park Commission

Meeting Minutes – December 17, 2012

Attendance: Brad Stone, Ron Knudsen, Bill Siewert, Julie Karlsrud, Joe Ellingson and 8 guests

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Park Activity Applications - no new applications received.

Park Business:

Wakondiota – Bathroom has been removed and hole filled.

Frontenac Station – the wood for the benches has been received and repairs will be done.  
3 ducks had to be removed.

Community Center – all is good.

Valhalla - Boat ramp – wood was received for the repairs to the dock.  
In the coming week the buckthorn and other limbs that were cut will be pulled from the hillside and put in the pile to burn.

It was brought up that Pastor Mark from the Methodist church may have all the paperwork and history of plans for the steamboat landing area. Mary Beardon will check into this and let us know if she can get this information from him for us. The other information that we are waiting on is still at the attorney's office.

Lynette Nadeau and Keith Hill of Goat Peak Ranch presented information and a slide show of how they would come in and set up the areas needing to be cleared of buck thorn and other invasive growth such as prickly ash, honeysuckle, box elder and sumac. This is done by fencing of the area and letting the goats clear it. The goats go for the items we would like to have cleared before they would touch the mature trees that we would want to keep. We could also wrap the trees we don't want them to damage. The last items that the goats would eat are the grasses. The best time of the year to do this would be late spring or summer. The cost is based on the amount of monitoring that the goats would need and fencing amounts. Lynette said that if they did our project that they would probably transport the goats back and forth each day rather than leave them over night. Keith said it can be as low as .50 cents a head. Price will be determined if we proceed with them. Lynette and Keith have done other work in our area with great success – the old Flower Valley Orchard, AP Anderson Park in Red Wing, Boy Scout Ranch in Rochester, Hay Creek Rec Area are just a few.

McGhie Betts Environmental Services, Inc. representatives presented what they could do for us in helping develop a Park Design. They have also worked with Goat Peak Ranch in some of their other projects. This firm works with the community on how to use the areas, how to manage the invasive growth, develop picnic areas and trails and all being mindful of the historic aspects. They work rapidly in getting the plan and logistics in place as well as funding and use of volunteers. They do have access to grants that are available for project needs such as ours.

Park Commissioners contact information:

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Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted – Julie Karlsrud